DBH
Division of Behavioral Health

Missouri Department of Mental Health
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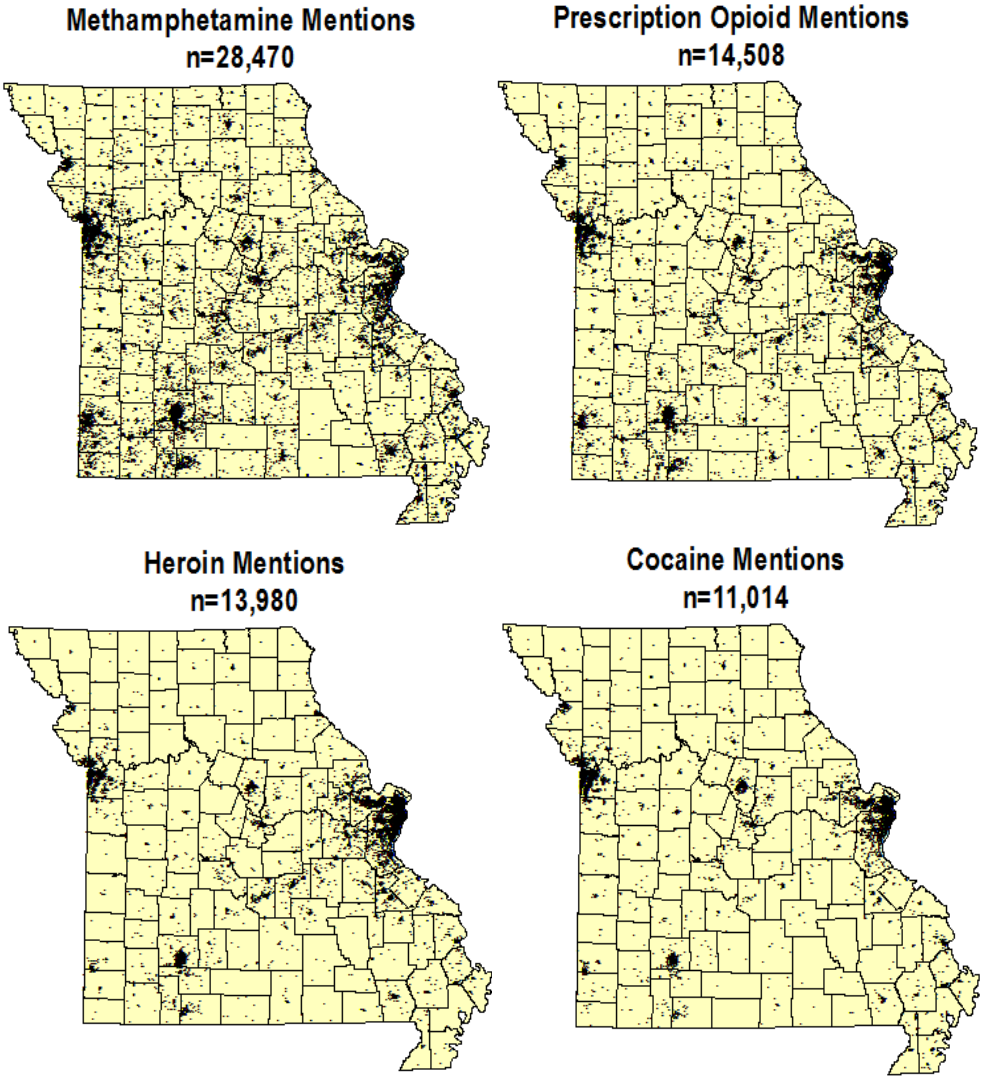
Geographic Differences in Drug Use

Treatment Admission Data: The Missouri Department of Mental Health provides substance treatment to about 43,600 Missourians annually. Marijuana is the most common illicit drug identified as a problem by individuals entering treatment. Other drugs identified include methamphetamine, heroin, cocaine, and prescription opioids like oxycodone and hydrocodone.

Geographic information like addresses can be mapped to examine spatial patterns. When addresses of individuals admitted to substance treatment are mapped according to drug use, it is possible to view geographic differences in drug use. With dot maps, each dot represents an individual admitted to treatment. Dot maps provide more granular detail than is available with other types of maps. When viewed on a small scale that covers a large area like that of the state, individual addresses cannot be determined and confidentiality of the individual is preserved. Dot maps will be influenced by overall population distribution. Even with population influences, geographic differences can be observed.



Residence of individuals admitted to substance treatment between 2014 and 2016 with methamphetamine, prescription opioid, heroin, and/or cocaine use.

Geographic Differences in Drug Use:

- ***Methamphetamine:*** Methamphetamine is much more distributed in rural areas compared to other illicit drugs. It appears more common in the Kansas City metropolitan area than heroin or cocaine. The drug is also prominent in the Central region and Southwest corner of the state. In Central region, the drug's use can be seen along the I-44 corridor extending from St. Louis to Springfield.
- ***Prescription Opioids:*** Misuse of prescription opioids is somewhat distributed across the state—but less so compared to methamphetamine. Misuse has notable activity in the Southwest corner including Springfield, Joplin, and Branson. Prescription opioids are more prominent in Southwest region than compared to heroin. Other areas of concentration include the state's two large urban areas—Kansas City and St. Louis—as well as rural areas south of St. Louis.
- ***Heroin:*** Heroin is more common in the St. Louis area and widespread in the suburban and rural counties surrounding the city. The drug's presence in Kansas City is more confined to the urban area.
- ***Cocaine***: Cocaine is concentrated in the state's urban areas including Kansas City and St. Louis and to a lesser extent in Columbia and Springfield. Cocaine use is sparse in the state's rural areas.

For more information please contact the Division of Behavioral Health at (573)751-4942 or email: dbhmail@dmh.mo.gov